decided about Mineral Rights of CBM which belongs to respective States; and

(e) whether CBM, if exploited, can solve electricity problem in Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) to (e) Coal Bed Methane (CBM), being Natural Gas, is covered under the provisions of the Oil (Regulation and Development) Act, 1948 and Petroleum and Natural Gas Rules, 1959. The available studies indicate the presence of CBM resources in the States of West Bengal, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat. The commerciality of CBM production can be known only after exploration of these areas is carried out.

Government of Gujarat have requested for sharing of Production Linked Payment (PLP) and commercial discovery bonus in the ratio of 50:50 and this request is under the consideration of the Government of India. Under the CBM policy, the contractors would be free to sell CBM in the domestic market, which would cover the power sector in Gujarat as well.

Outstanding taxes against industrial/commercial unit

† *395. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of income-tax, estate-tax and other commercial taxes outstanding against the top 120 industrial/commercial units of the country in the year 2000-2001 and as on date;

(b) the year-wise amount recovered during the last three years; and

(c) the reasons for non-recovery of the remaining amount?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) As per information available, the total income tax dues outstanding against the top 120 companies aggregate to Rs. 15,588 crores (approx.) as on 30.6.2001.

---

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Estate duty tax is not applicable for the Assessment year 2000-2001. Since commercial taxes are a subject matter of the State Government's details in respect of the same cannot be furnished by the Ministry of Finance.

(b) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House shortly.

(c) Most of the demands are disputed in appeals and appeals are pending before various appellate authorities and courts. Some of the demands are also stayed by courts and appellate authorities. The recovery of tax, however, is a continuous process involving the use of various statutory provisions. These include charging of interest levy of penalty, attachement and sale of moveable and immovable properties, etc. Periodical review and monitoring of cases involving high demands are made by higher authorities on a regular basis and necessary instructions are issued from time to time for effecting the recovery of taxes.

Talks with Malaysia for crude oil

† *396. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made alternative arrangements for getting crude oil in case supplies are disturbed from Middle East due to abnormal situation;

(b) if so, the names of countries from where crude would be imported;

(c) whether talks have been held with Malaysia for supplies of crude; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) and (b) As of now, disruption in sourcing of crude oil requirements from the Middle East is not expected.

---

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.